1 | Review your pre-crisis onboarding plan

Don't try to reinvent the wheel. Instead of changing the entire onboarding process, start by looking at your existing onboarding plan. Ask yourself: what activities can be moved online? Are there any activities you can add, remove or keep?

2 | Prepare in advance

Make the necessary arrangements for hardware and/or software to be delivered or set up a few days prior to the new hires' start date. This allows time for any technical issues to be sorted beforehand. If they are using their own equipment, let them know if they are eligible for any expense claims related to work-from-home (WFH) setups.

3 | Communicate in abundance

In the initial phase of onboarding, make sure that the new hires have plenty of opportunities to connect with their immediate managers. On top of that, you might want to allocate an onboarding buddy who can help conduct regular pulse checks and help assimilate these new hires into the organisation. After all, not having face-to-face interactions can add to the anxiety as a newcomer, so creating routine and familiarity is key.

4 | Mix business with casual

Consider mixing job / technical trainings and casual virtual meetings with the new hires' teammates, especially in the first few weeks. This prevents digital fatigue from setting in, and gives them a first taste of the company's culture. Rather than fill up their calendars daily with onboarding activities, also allow breaks and free time so they can take a breather.

5 | Create engagement

With digital onboarding potentially lasting for weeks ahead, it can make new hires feel isolated in the long run. Maintain and encourage participation via communication platforms, even if it's something as simple as creating messaging groups. Have themed weeks or fun competitions, such as lunch ideas, WFH complaints, best home workout routines or even virtual drinks on the last hour of Friday — the possibilities are endless!

6 | Lead with transparency

Work with your business leaders to plan virtual town halls that cater to new hires. Potential topics include how the company is managing the outbreak, what the short and long-term goals are, as well as what the new hires can bring to the table. Allow time for questions so new hires feel heard and valued.

7 | Look ahead & get ready

It's easy to get caught up in adjusting to the 'new norm' of remote work and engagement. At some point, the crisis will subside, so you want to be ready for that. Take a pause and plan how you will take digital onboarding forward after the company shifts back to business as usual. For example, how much of the digital onboarding do you want to keep? What were the best bits of digital onboard that new hires enjoyed during the WFH period? Think ahead and put the necessary processes in place.

Tips on digital onboarding amidst COVID-19

Get in touch

We are here to help you navigate through these uncertain times and have tools to help onboarding effectively and safely into WFH arrangements. Start a conversation and share your most pressing hiring concerns and questions. We will do what we can to assist.